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Desired Nutrition Education Topics for the Field of Oncology

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Honors Research Project Proposal

Desired Nutrition Education Topics for the Field of Oncology

I. Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the study is to compare differing perspectives on desired nutrition education topics in relation to oncology; perspectives representing either oncology patients or their family or support systems. The main goal of the study is to obtain accurate, qualitative information that represents the education materials individuals desire related to cancer and nutrition information. The obtained information can be used to focus on the development of future nutrition education programs. In regards to the main motivation, it can be stated as follows; cancer is a disease that affects almost everyone, whether it be through themselves, a loved one, a neighbor, a friend, etc. Therefore, narrowing down nutrition education individuals request to learn is critical for treatment purposes. Nutrition education has a heavy impact on oncology patients because nutrition is one aspect of their condition, treatment, and disease management they have complete control over.

A potential benefit from the research is when specific education material is requested, it will allow for more in depth information to be gathered and utilized in a positive way for the population. Also, the study gives the participants the ability to voice their opinions on what they would like to see in regards to nutrition education for the area of Oncology. The overall results will be analyzed and used as a reference for future creation of nutrition programs. Specifically, working with Stewart's Caring Place, a free-service oncology resource center, in implementing programs with detailed, nutrition curriculum that could be taught and available to their members. Upon an initial meeting with the program director at the center, it was clear, nutrition education was an area they were missing: but it was requested time after

time. Therefore, it was another motivation for the study; working with Stewart's Caring place in order to provide what is sought-out.

II. Methodology

The exploratory study focuses on obtaining and analyzing qualitative data recovered from two separate questionnaires presented to two different populations within the oncology field. The participants are individuals with cancer, as well as any family members or people classified as a "support system," who receive treatment at a Stewart's Caring Place, a community partner for specialized oncology services. The designated age range for the project includes those over the age of 18, therefore no minors will be included in this study. It is expected around 20-50 participants will be taking part in the study and completing the provided questionnaire. Participants were chosen due to a connection with cancer and having an affiliation with Stewart's Caring Place. Exclusion criteria includes: not having or knowing someone who has cancer, not receiving services from Stewart's Caring Place, not attending nutrition presentations on the day of data collection, and being <18 years of age.

As mentioned previously, two questionnaires will be developed with questions that are specific to two differing populations in regards to desired nutrition education for oncology: the individual with cancer or their family or support systems. After nutrition presentations or food demonstrations are held at Stewart's Caring Place, the questionnaires will be provided to any willing participant for completion, after signing an accompanying consent form. Questionnaires will be filled-out and returned to the researcher once completed on that same day. Duplicates of questions are present on both of the questionnaires, therefore the participants' responses, from both groups, will be compared and analyzed to answer the following question, what does each group want? Additional information that will be

collected, demographics, information on shopping and cooking, if treatment is in progress, possible side effects or symptoms history, involvement in care, etc.

There is an abundance of existing research in regards to oncology-related nutrition education. Therefore, this study is aimed at building on past research and focusing on information that is requested and seen as being beneficial to the affected Oncology population: from their point-of-view.

Tentative timeline for the honors research project

Time Frame (Month/Year)	Description of Task to Complete
August-September, 2019	Develop, edit, and receive approval of final drafts of both questionnaires; initial overall approval from project sponsor and at least 1 reader
September, 2019	Complete research project proposal and turn it in to IdeaExchange for approval from the Honors College
End of September, 2019	Complete IRB exemption form and turn it for final approval and possible exemption from full review. IRB form turned in with the project specific consent form as well as both questionnaires previously approved by the project sponsor and reader
September, 2019-February, 2020	Host 3 nutrition education classes Stewart's Caring Place, in September, October, and November, and hand out the questionnaires to willing participants after signing consent forms. Continue to hand out/collect completed questionnaires + consent forms until the end of December if necessary. Compare and analyze responses from the questionnaire and develop the project abstract. Abstract will be submitted by The beginning of February to be presented at the FNCE conference in October 2020.
February-April, 2020	Compare and analyze responses from the questionnaires and develop the findings into an academic poster. Once the poster is completed, have the 2 readers look over the work for possible edits/corrections. Once final

	corrections are made, turn the completed poster with all the necessary paperwork for final grading to project sponsor.
April 24, 2020	Turn in final grade, from project sponsor, and project to IdeaExchange.

This timeline is subject to change as research progresses

III. Outcomes

It is hoped that the conclusions drawn from the presented study will aid in developing effective and appropriate oncology nutrition education that specific population wants to focus on, learn about, and utilize in their everyday lives; at Stewarts Caring Place and other Oncology centers like it. The results of the study will be represented in an academic poster and presented publicly at the undergraduate interdisciplinary symposium in April 2020, potentially at FNCE nation conference in October 2020, and Ohio Nutrition and Dietetics conference in April 2020. Intended audiences range from registered dietitians, students pursuing degrees in Nutrition and Dietetics, other medical professionals, undergraduate students from The University of Akron, Professors from The University of Akron, as well as professionals interested or strictly dealing with oncology patients and their families.

IV. Academic Impact

My honors research project would aid and build on my undergraduate experience and knowledge at the University of Akron as the results will allow myself to be more effective in a medical area that I want to pursue post-graduation from the school of Nutrition and Dietetics in the College of Health Professions. My past experiences in classes focusing on medical nutrition therapy for compromised health individuals and my understanding of nutrition through the life cycle will allow myself to elevate my research tactics when developing and completing the project. I hope to conclude my research project with credible

and valuable information that would guide my future, education counseling sessions in inpatient or outpatient pediatric care: specializing in oncology. Also, I plan on attending school for continued education, masters or doctorate, and my honors research project could potentially help me with that process.